

INTRODUCTION

Water resource issues are major forces shaping the future of South Florida. The South Florida Water Management District (District, SFWMD) is charged with determining how to resolve the complex water resource questions facing the region, and the agency's success will depend on its ability to look ahead and plan for the future. The *District Water Management Plan* (DWMP) represents the District's examination of the complicated issues related to water supply, flood protection, water quality, and natural systems within the District, and describes the priorities and projects to which the District is committed. The breadth of programs and activities undertaken by the District reflects the multifunctional nature of water resource management in South Florida.

Each of the five water management districts has been charged with the preparation of a DWMP, consistent with the requirements of Section 373.036, Florida Statutes (F.S.), and Section 62-40.501, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.). The requirements for development of the DWMP were further interpreted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), in conjunction with the Executive Office of the Governor and the five water management districts, through the development of the *Format and Guidelines, District Water Management Plan* document (FDEP, 1999).

The DWMP is also guided by the policies of the *State Comprehensive Plan* (Chapter 187, F.S.); the Florida Water Resources Act (Chapter 373, F.S.); the Air and Water Pollution Control Act (Chapter 403, F.S.); and State Water Policy (Chapter 62-40, F.A.C.). The DWMP, through its establishment of project schedules, will provide direction for the District's *Strategic Plan*, which will be used to direct resources for the agency's other planning efforts through the budget process. The results of these plans will then be implemented to improve the water resources of the region. **Figure 1** illustrates the relationship of the DWMP to the District's other planning activities.

In addition to serving as a direction-setting document for the District, the DWMP is also a communication tool. As such, it plays a role in Florida's growth management process. The DWMP should be considered as a source of technical information for local governments seeking guidance on water resource issues of concern within their jurisdictions.

The inclusion of performance measures is an integral part of the water management planning process. The 1995 DWMP (SFWMD, 1995a) included potential measures of performance for each of the District's areas of responsibility (water supply, flood protection, water quality, and natural systems), twelve of which have been reported on in successive DWMP annual reports (SFWMD, 1996, 1997a, 1998a). This update of the DWMP goes a step further by linking objectives and strategies to performance measures. These performance measures were developed through extensive meetings between the Executive Office of the Governor, FDEP, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and the state's five water management districts.

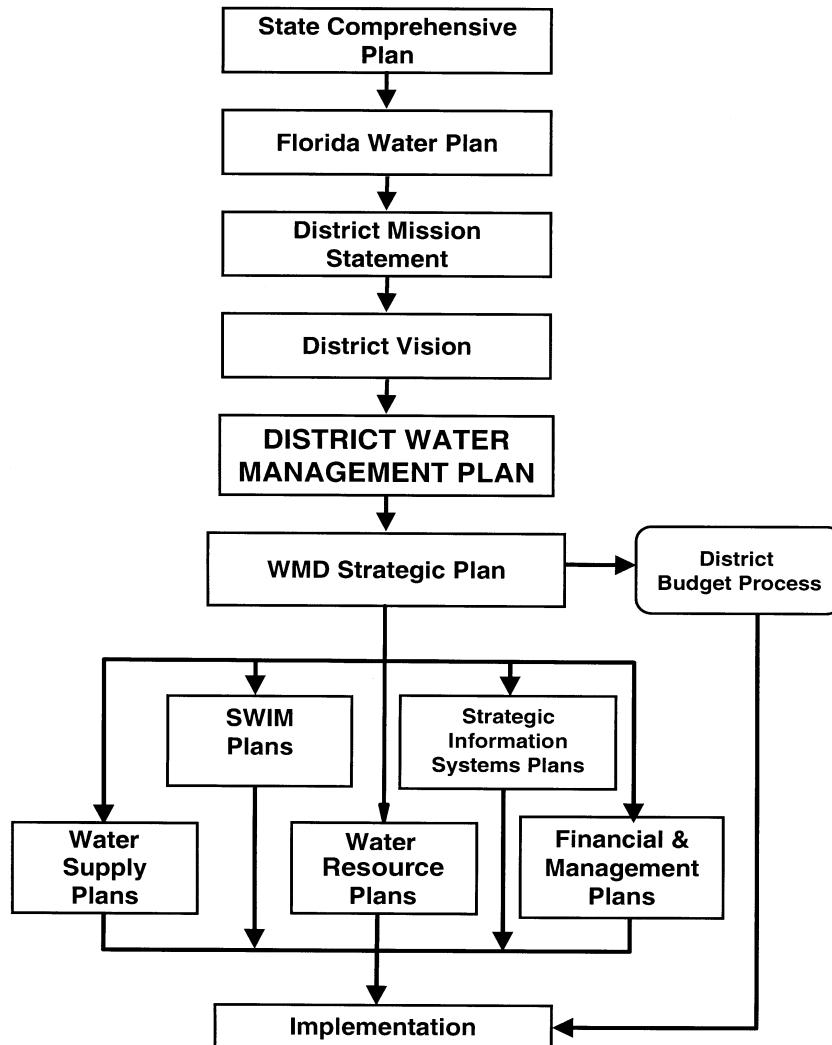


Figure 1. Water Management Planning Process.